

John 12:12-15 NIV

***The next day the great crowd that had come for the Feast heard that Jesus was on his way to Jerusalem. They took palm branches and went out to meet him, shouting, "Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord! Blessed is the King of Israel!"***

***Jesus found a young donkey and sat upon it, as it is written, "Do not be afraid, O Daughter of Zion; see, your king is coming, seated on a donkey's colt."***

For more detailed accounts see Matthew 21 and Mark 11.

Jesus rode into Jerusalem on a donkey in fulfillment of prophecy (Isaiah 62:11 & Zechariah 9:9). The crowds welcomed Him with a quote from the Psalms. (Psalm 118:25-26)

The irony of Palm Sunday is that while the crowd welcomed Jesus as the Messiah the very form of their greeting showed that they didn't understand Him at all. The waving of the palm branches would be similar to waving a national flag today.

They were welcoming the king that would kick the Romans out of Israel and restore her to being a free state. They were welcoming a military leader, a warrior.

In a way it's no wonder they would turn their backs on Him in less than a week and cry out for Him to be crucified. It's no wonder Judas sold Him out for the price of an ordinary slave - thirty pieces of silver. He was not what they wanted. They loved His miracles but missed the point of His ministry totally.

They wanted temporary freedom from oppression rather than forgiveness of their sins and eternal life. Despite all His teaching and all the Word proclaimed about Him they missed Him. They saw Him in person and heard His voice yet they didn't see Him at all.

Even the disciples didn't truly understand, although after the resurrection the pieces would come together and they would understand. The world still misses who Jesus is. He's not just a good man. He isn't just a prophet of God. He isn't a religious leader. Jesus isn't just a teacher of ethics. He isn't just a worker of signs and wonders. He is God incarnate. He is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world.

Jesus didn't come to give us a temporary solution to our earthly problems. He came to be the redeemer of all who would surrender their lives to God and follow Him. He came to redeem us from the mess we had gotten ourselves into and could never get out of on our own.

There will be a time when He returns as judging warrior and king. When that happens woe betide those who have rejected Him and chosen darkness over light.

As we approach Good Friday - an odd name considering the events of the day - spend some time in God's Word and remember who Jesus is and why He really came. Then rejoice.